

Legislators Tour Offender Programming at the Putnamville Correctional Facility

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Representative Amos Thomas



A Legislative- Judicial tour was held at the Putnamville Correctional Facility on Wednesday, September 19, 2007. The day began with the "Abdul in the Morning" radio talk show airing live from the facility. Abdul Hakim Shabazz, talk show host, interviewed Representatives Ralph Foley and Amos Thomas,

Senator Richard Bray, Commissioner J. David Donahue, Superintendent Michael Osburn and other IDOC staff. "I believe that this is the first time that we've had a live radio show aired from a facility and we are thrilled that Mr. Shabazz chose our facility to be the first" stated Michael J. Osburn, Superintendent.

The facility's Emergency Squad, under the direction of their Field Commander, demonstrated tactical techniques and formations, and, displayed weaponry utilized to quell and contain disturbances.

Elected Officials, Community Advisory Board members, the producer of "Abdul in the Morning" and IDOC staff toured and interacted with offenders participating in various programs: Equine Management, Vocational Training, Purposeful Living Unit Serve, Pre- Release Re- Entry, and the Skidz/ Pallet program. Offenders answered visitors' questions and discussed learned skills; their plans to apply those skills after release; and, the day to day activities inside prison walls.

Lunch, or in prison slang "chow," was a first hand experience for the visitors. Guests dined on food served to the offender population, prepared by Aramark staff, and ate desserts prepared by offenders in the Culinary Arts Program. "We wanted you to experience an actual day in the life of an offender; observe staff and offender interaction; and, see the Re-Entry process at work" stated Commissioner Donahue.

"The prison/ community partnership and offender programming is very impressive. I am glad to have had the opportunity to tour the facility and I look forward to the opportunity to visit again" stated Representative Amos Thomas. Representative Thomas is a Community Advisory Board member at the Putnamville Correctional Facility.

"The Indiana Department of Correction is committed to providing a service to the community. We challenge staff to develop innovative programming to provide offenders with marketable job skills, resulting in offenders returning to our communities as law abiding citizens, therefore, reducing the rate of recidivism. I submit to you that the Re-Entry process, the partnership between Corrections and the community, and, the support of our Legislators play a significant role in this process" said Commissioner J. David Donahue.

About The Department of Correction

The Department employs over 8,000 employees and houses 24,000 adult and juveniles in 32 facilities, ranging from minimum to maximum custody, prison camps, juvenile facilities and work release centers. The Department's home page on the Internet can be found at: <http://www.in.gov/indcorrection>. The Department's Re-entry Site can be found: <http://www.reentry.in.gov>.